

**Title:**

Sexual Quality of Life in the Female Breast Cancer Survivor

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**Session Title:**

Rising Stars of Research and Scholarship Invited Student Posters

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**Keywords:**

Quality of life, breast cancer and sexual health

**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

Cancer survivors have late and long term side effects from treatments that impact quality of life, including sexual function. Quality of life needs are not being addressed by healthcare providers. The purpose of this project was to implement a screening process and sexual function measurement for female breast cancer survivors.

**Learning Activity:**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to identify two sexual quality of life needs of breast cancer survivors	Review of the Sexual Symptom Checklist for Women
The learner will be able to identify at least two elements of sexual function assessment on the Female Sexual Function Index.	Review of the Female Sexual Function Index

**Abstract Text:**

By 2024, the estimated number of cancer survivors in the United States will be over 19 million. Cancer survivors have late and long term side effects from cancer and cancer treatments that impact quality of life. Addressing quality of life issues for cancer survivors has been a topic that has been discussed in the health care community since the release of the Institute of Medicine Report in 2005. Cancer survivors continue to state that quality of life needs are not being addressed by health care providers. Female breast cancer survivors' sexual quality of life needs are not identified or managed on the cancer care continuum.

In an outpatient comprehensive cancer center in Northeastern Oklahoma, it was identified that cancer survivors have concerns about sexual health as a result of data collected from patients' self-reported questionnaire. There is currently no screening process in place for identification of cancer survivors with sexual quality of life needs. In addition, there is no evaluation method for sexual function following intervention. The purpose of this evidence-based project was to increase the identification and symptom management of sexual quality of life needs in female breast cancer survivors. Outcomes for this practice change revolved around identification and management of sexual quality of life needs.

The use of an evidence-based practice model assisted the cancer center in implementing a screening process and a validated tool to assess sexual quality of life. The translational framework identified for use was the Iowa Model of Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Quality Care. The Iowa Model provided a framework for decision-making in an algorithmic format. The model supported a practice change using a team approach which is congruent with the work dynamics and philosophy of this cancer center environment. Quality of life for cancer survivors is a priority at the cancer center implementation site. Medical staff, nursing staff, and hospital administration focus efforts on assisting patients in meeting or resolving quality of life issues. Data that supported the identified problem included patient reported symptoms and anecdotal patient feedback gathered at the implementation site. Of the issues that were identified as symptoms, sexual interest/concern is one of the top three concerns for quality of life. The Advanced Practice Provider (APP) for Survivorship Support Services volunteered to lead the initiative to address this quality of life concern for the organization. The APP solicited disciplines to form an interdisciplinary team to assist in implementing a practice change. The following disciplines participated on a team: breast nurse navigator, nutrition services, pharmacy, registered nurse (RN) survivorship care manager, physician director for Quality of Life and Survivorship Support Services, Clinic Director, naturopathic medicine, mind and body/psycho-oncology, RNs from inpatient services, radiation oncology,

stem cell, and an education specialist. The pilot unit for the project was the Breast Center of Excellence. The Sexual Symptom Checklist for Women was introduced to female breast cancer survivors on admission to the cancer center. If a sexual quality of life need was identified, then a referral was placed for follow up. The RN survivorship care manager would meet with the survivor and use the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI-6) as a baseline assessment and measurement tool at subsequent visits. Cancer treatment can be responsible for changes in sexual quality of life in female breast cancer survivors. By providing a mechanism for screening of sexual quality of life needs survivors are able to begin the conversation and explore treatment options with providers.